

The Do-Nothing Republican Congress

Republicans control the House, the Senate, and the White House, and they have a responsibility to govern and deliver results for the American people. Yet, over halfway through the year, Republicans have no major legislative accomplishments. Their deep divisions are preventing them from delivering results for the American people. The press is taking note that Republicans are failing to accomplish any of their priorities:

“Republicans are failing at governance. And they know it. Their senatorially painful decision announced on Tuesday to sacrifice some of lawmakers’ usually sacrosanct August recess was a public confession that they have not gotten the job done even while controlling the White House, Senate and House of Representatives. In deciding to forgo at least the first two weeks of their regular summer getaway, Senator Mitch McConnell and his colleagues essentially admitted that they could not afford to go home to face constituents without making a concerted effort to pass contentious health care legislation and put some other points on the board.” [NY Times, [7/12/17](#)]

From the Washington Post’s [Republicans increasingly uncertain of a legislative victory before August](#):

“The Republican Congress returns to Capitol Hill this week increasingly uncertain that a major legislative victory is achievable in the three weeks before lawmakers leave town for their month-long summer recess.”

“Most immediately, GOP leaders and President Trump are under enormous pressure to approve health-care legislation — but that is only the beginning. Virtually every piece of their ambitious legislative agenda is stalled, according to multiple Republicans inside and outside of Congress.”

“They have made no serious progress on a budget despite looming fall deadlines to extend spending authorization and raise the debt ceiling. Promises to launch an ambitious infrastructure-building program have faded away. And the single issue with the most potential to unite Republicans — tax reform — has yet to progress beyond speeches and broad-strokes outlines.” [[7/8/17](#)]

And so are Republicans in the House and Senate:

House Freedom Caucus Chair Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC): “[Voters] are going to start saying, ‘What difference does it make who’s in power?...There is a real anxiety among the people that I serve on why we’re not putting more things on the president’s desk...They’re tired of excuses.” [Washington Post, [7/8/17](#)]

Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR): “We’d better get our act together...We’re better than this. ... We’re not governing right now. We’re stuck.” [Politico, [6/29/17](#)]

Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY): “The fact that we’re not getting to these issues — health care, budget, tax reform — is frustrating. We came here to move the needle.” [Politico, [6/29/17](#)]

Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY): “They confuse activity with progress.” [Twitter, [7/12/17](#)]

Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH): “This idea that we’re going to leave here and go home for five weeks makes absolutely no sense...” [Politico, [7/12/17](#)]

Senator John McCain (R-AZ): “We have all of these issues sitting out there that we have no schedule for being resolved....” [Politico, [6/29/17](#)]

Here is a look at where their legislative agenda stands:

NO PROGRESS ON HEALTH CARE

The Senate's second attempt at TrumpCare did not have enough votes to even bring to the Floor, and neither did Senator McConnell's fallback plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act without replacing it. Here's what some Senators had to say about that plan:

Senator Shelly Moore Capito (R-WV): "I did not come to Washington to hurt people.... I have serious concerns about how we continue to provide affordable care to those who have benefited from West Virginia's decision to expand Medicaid, especially in light of the growing opioid crisis... With that in mind, I cannot vote to repeal Obamacare without a replacement plan that addresses my concerns and the needs of West Virginians." [7/18/2017]

Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK): "I cannot vote to proceed to repeal the ACA without reform that allows people the choice they want, the affordability they need and the quality of care they deserve." [7/18/2017]

Senator Susan Collins (R-ME): "I do not think that it's constructive to repeal a law that is so interwoven within our health care system without having a replacement plan in place. We can't just hope that we will pass a replacement within the next two years. Repealing without a replacement would create great uncertainty for individuals who rely on the ACA and cause further turmoil in the insurance markets." [7/18/2017]

Democrats continue to urge Republicans to abandon their repeal efforts and instead work together to improve the Affordable Care Act.

NO BUDGET ENACTED

It has been 95 days since the statutory April 15 deadline to complete work on a budget. Yet, House Republicans are only just now marking up a budget, and there are significant questions over whether it can pass the House:

Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC): "There are not the votes to pass it... I haven't read it all but, I mean, I've been following it pretty closely, and I didn't see any epiphany there that would say, 'Oh, my goodness, now everybody will jump on board.'" [The Hill [7/18/17](#)]

Rep. Dave Brat (R-VA): "In light of the healthcare cluster in the Senate... I need to see our tax plan [without] [the border-adjustment tax] as well as the welfare to **work language in the budget instructions before I can vote yes.**" [The Hill, [7/17/17](#)]

Rep. Charlie Dent (R-PA): "'We are writing the appropriations bill with **numbers that are not real,**' said Tuesday Group co-Chairman Charlie Dent (R-Pa.), citing the budget's \$511 billion allocation for nondefense discretionary spending and \$621.5 billion allocation for defense." [The Hill [7/18/17](#)]

In a letter from the House Tuesday Group, against spending cuts: "Absent such a bipartisan, bicameral agreement, we are reticent to support any budget resolution on the House floor..." [The Hill, [7/17/17](#)]

NO MEANINGFUL ACTION ON JOBS & THE ECONOMY

While President Trump promised to be the greatest jobs President ever created, Republicans have yet to put forward a single jobs bill for Americans. In recent weeks, the press has reported on economic indicators that seem to be lacking and Republicans are failing to deliver on jobs and the economy:

“After a prolonged recovery that culminated in two years of record sales, the American auto industry is slowing down, with fewer buyers in dealer showrooms and fewer workers on the factory floor.” [New York Times, [7/4/17](#)]

“The promise of faster economic growth has become a study in the triumph of hope over experience.... other recent indicators in areas like consumer spending, construction and auto sales have been decidedly less robust. As a result, Wall Street forecasters have been busy lowering their growth estimates for the second quarter, which ended last Friday, much as they were forced to do over the first three months of the year.” [New York Times, [7/6/17](#)]

NO PLAN TO ENSURE WE PAY OUR NATION’S BILLS

Republicans still do not have a plan to ensure we pay our nation’s bills. Democrats have made clear we will work with Republicans to pass a clean bill and are urging Republicans to not hold the debt limit hostage to partisan demands and take us to the brink of default once again:

Rep. Scott Perry (R-PA): “The debt ceiling is coming; we know it’s coming. There’s absolutely no reason to push ourselves into a corner like a bunch of rats.” [Politico, [7/12/17](#)]

Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin: “...When we’ve already committed to pay for things, we have to honor those commitments. And the debt limit is about paying for things that we’ve already committed to. It’s different than the budget process... but that when we’ve committed for them it’s clear we’re going to pay for them. And the dollar is the reserve currency of the world, and the United States is the best credit in the world, and we’re going to keep it that way.” [ABC This Week, [7/9/17](#)]

NO TAX REFORM BILL

While Republicans claim they are making progress on tax reform, no such bill exists. Just like their budget, Republicans are deeply divided over tax reform, and they have only given vague speeches filled with talking points and ambiguous promises to the middle class without any legislative action or details. The business community is getting impatient with their lack of progress:

“Mr. Trump’s economic advisers and leaders in Congress have promised to unveil a unified tax plan soon after Labor Day, leaving them with little time to reach agreement on many contentious issues.... the business world is growing increasingly impatient.” [New York Times, [7/5/17](#)]

The partisan approach that Republicans have taken so far is not yielding any accomplishments. It’s time for Republicans to work with Democrats to get things done for the American people.